

recall a couple years ago we passed legislation that allowed the City of Lincoln to increase their sales tax to the 1.5 option and the voters in the City of Lincoln approved it. On numerous occasions, as I recall last year, we discussed the issue of allowing the expansion of the local option for cities throughout the state and in the recent election some cities adopted the sales tax option allowing for them an extra cent to be placed to reduce their property taxes and some local cities rejected it. This is the decision-making power of the people. In addition to that in the recent election we had bond issues that were on the ballot and most of those, if not all of them, in Douglas County I know of, they were voted in approval by the people in the area, and that was a direct impact upon their property taxes. They said, yes we do want our roads in good shape, we do want good schools, so we're willing to support a bond issue. Much the same as the people in the three NRD districts that are at their level have that option, the people have the option to increase that levy if they feel the NRD is doing a good job and apparently in two of those NRDs there was some dissatisfaction with the way the NRD is spending their money. Now I'm rather fortunate. I have a very good NRD in my area, the Papio NRD, and they have done a good job in working with the local City of Omaha as well as the other cities in the area to try to make more use of the money towards flood control. In addition to that they made changes in their composition that reduced down the proportion of people to elected officials so that this law really won't have much of an impact on them because they realized that there were some serious problems with the present structure. It has, to my knowledge, I think there is a few other NRDs that are taking this step as well. Now it doesn't go to the point of one man, one vote where it should be. As we are elected to the Legislature, I think the NRDs should be elected along the same lines. In that portion of the bill I strongly support, and for that reason I'll probably be supporting the bill but the portion that deals with the levy, where we're increasing it and we...the local communities have the option of increasing the levy, I think the present system is working quite well. I know in my NRD we haven't had...I hope we haven't had that problem. I know I went to a recent dedication this last fall for the NRD's new building. They constructed a rather nice building, a new structure. They were renting space but they feel that they had the money to build a new structure and I suppose that is their local option to make those decisions if they feel that that is in their best interest. So I'm not here to second-guess what the NRDs are spending the money on, but what I'm here to say is that I don't think we should go around